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SCHOOL TO DOUBLE UP

A BANBURY school has submitted £700,000 plans that will see it double in size just five years after it opened.

Primary school Dashwood Banbury Academy, in Merton Street, has applied to build six new classrooms.

Currently the school is oversubscribed with 221 pupils — its capacity is 210, and has to turn children and parents away. But the move will create a total of 180 new student spaces and 12 new teaching jobs. The

By Sam McGregor

school will expand over six years, with an initial intake of 60 extra students, then 30 more pupils a year.

Funding for the project, to the tune of £686,900, has been provided by the Department for Education.

Dr Fiona Hammans, executive principal, said: "The school is significantly oversubscribed each year and we have to turn parents and children away. That's quite

distressing for everyone.

"It has one of the best Ofsted judgements in the town."

Dashwood School was originally based in St John's Road, and was put in special measures in November 2007 after a catastrophic Ofsted report.

Eighteen months later, under new principal Vicki McLean, it came out of special measures.

In September the school was rated "good".

The school, which was built in 2008, is federated with Banbury AAT Academy, in Ruskin Road. The schools' executive was successful in a

bid to the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund to increase the school to two-form entry across the board.

If the plans are approved, work will start straight away and classrooms will be ready for youngsters by September 2014.

Dr Hammans said: "When we are given planning approval, we will start immediately and will be finished well in advance of September 2014.

"It's a short-build programme to minimise impact in the school."

The school has this year been able to increase its reception intake to two forms after refurbishing a classroom.

Over the past 20 years about 400 homes have been built the former Cattle Market and more in other parts of Grimsbury, creating more demand the two primary school in the area, Dashwood and St Leonards School.

Local councillor Ann Bonner said: "I welcome this news, I think it's absolutely fantastic. I have often thought it's a shame it's not larger

"The school is really committed to the area and work doesn't stop when the bell goes. It's a brilliant school and I can't speak more highly of it."



ABOVE: Town, district and county councillor Ann Bonner

LEFT: Dashwood Banbury Academy executive principal Dr Fiona Hammans



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InBRIEF**Man admits sex offence**

■ A MAN has admitted a sexual offence involving a 14-year-old girl.

David Sherburn, 38, of Bloxham Road, Milcombe, admitted sexual activity with a child under 16.

He appeared at Oxford Crown Court on Monday to answer the charge, and his case was adjourned until Wednesday, July 31, for sentencing.

He was released on bail on the condition he does not contact the victim.

Conman alert

■ A HANDBAG with cash and bank cards was stolen during a distraction burglary in Bretch Hill.

The incident happened at about 9pm on Wednesday of last week in Woodgreen Avenue.

He is described as tanned, with dark hair, approximately 40-years-old, 5ft 10in tall, with a one-and-half-inch horizontal scar on his left cheek below the eye.

Anyone with any information should contact the police on 101.

Cash boost

■ BANBURY-based Habitat for Humanity has been given a £3,000 boost thanks to Westgate Shopping Centre owner Land Securities. The charity supports people building affordable homes while providing skills.

Charity plea

■ THE Age UK shop in Parsons Street, Banbury, is calling for more stock to help fund the charity.

Donations can be handed in during the shop's opening hours, from 9am until 5pm.

Collections can be arranged by visiting the shop or calling 01295 256116.

Saddling up for a festival

HUNDREDS of people, dressed in colourful costumes, were at People's Park in Banbury on Sunday for the town's annual Hobby Horse Festival.

A parade through the town marked the start of the event, led by a cadet band. This was followed by games and hobby-horse races for both adults and children.

By Sam McGregor

Jules, the Banburyshire storyteller, pictured below, said: "The festival was another very good example of a nice village fete-like atmosphere. It was a really great event."

A traditional race between the town mayor's team and the deputy

town mayor's team took place – with the mayor's team emerging victorious.

Mayor Nicholas Turner said: "It was a lovely day in the park and it was just a fantastic day all-round."

"People love coming here every year."

Live music, volleyball games and marquees with cream teas were also on offer at the festival.



ABOVE: Jules, the storyteller. TOP, right: Tennis coach Rosie Clark with councillor Kieron Mallon. RIGHT, middle: Alex Wyllie-Howkins and Ellis Thomas. RIGHT: Sharla Athy with her hobby horse

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'Night' owls stride out to raise cash for hospice

WHEN most people were tucked up in bed, 700 people were on the streets of Banbury on Saturday to raise cash.

A total of 550 people took part in the midnight walk around Banbury, each walking the equivalent of a half-marathon.

A further 164 marshals and helpers were out in force for the seventh annual event.

Walkers were warmed up by fitness instructor Karen Dixon, before the crowd left Banbury Cricket Club, in Bodicote, wearing flashing and glittering head boppers and bright orange T-shirts.

It is hoped the event has raised about £72,000 for

Katharine House Hospice.

Sheila Norton, corporate fundraiser and event organiser, said: "We've already received some fabulous feedback and are so pleased that last year's dreadful weather did not deter people from taking part."

"We had lots of first-time walkers who we hope will be back with us again next year, alongside those stalwarts who have taken part in each of the seven walks."

"The Katharine House Midnight Walk is a wonderful community event to be involved in and I'd like to thank everybody who has supported us this year."

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Fine and clean-up charge for flytipper who left address in dumped rubbish

A MAN who left his address in fly-tipped rubbish has been fined and ordered to pay for the mess to be cleared.

Joseph Whitfield, 25, of Chepstow Gardens, Banbury, appeared at Banbury Magistrates' Court on June 25 and admitted one charge of fly-tipping in Wroxton.

The court was told three black sacks, an Argos carrier bag containing rubbish and a red vacuum cleaner were found dumped last August on the side of Horley Path Road.

But when council investigators went through the rubbish in the bags they found two envelopes bearing Whitfield's name and address.

Whitfield told the court he had got lost and could not find the tip. He was also low on fuel so dumped the items.

Magistrates fined him £100 and told him to pay the £305.89 clean up costs.

Nigel Morris, Cherwell's lead member for clean and green, said: "There is never any excuse for fly-tipping so Mr Whitfield's defence of

being lost and low on fuel was certainly not acceptable.

"There are many aggravating features in this case including the fact that much of what Mr Whitfield left by the side of the road could have been placed in his green bin at home, and the vacuum could have been correctly disposed of for free at the Alkerton tip.

"His failure to disassociate himself from the rubbish by including envelopes with his details shows a blatant disregard for his offence.

"Hopefully this prosecution will serve as a warning to others that we will track people down and bring them to court to take responsibility for their actions."

£280,000 worth of property stolen Thief is jailed over a series of burglaries

A DRUG addict has been jailed after committing more than 90 burglaries and attempted burglaries and attempted £280,000 worth of property.

Danny Lane, of The Beeches Mobile Home Park, Old Nosed Road, Chipping Norton, pleaded guilty to 11 offences – but asked for a further 84 to be taken into consideration.

The 32-year-old carried out the crimes around Oxfordshire, Surrey and in London between 2010 and January this year.

His most recent offences were seven burglaries and four car thefts between October last year and May this year when he was arrested.

Jonathan Stone, prosecuting, told Oxford Crown Court that at the time Lane had been on temporary release from HM Prison Spring Hill, in Buckinghamshire, after receiving a three-year sentence in May 2011 – again for burglary.

On Friday he was sentenced

By Joe Nimmo

to six years for the burglaries and attempted burglaries, as well as three months for not returning to prison.

Mr Stone said Lane helped himself to a range of items including laptops, wallets, iPods, passports and jewellery.

He added that from one house Lane helped himself to property worth a total of £225,000, including a gold Cartier watch.

And at four of the houses he also took car keys and then stole vehicles from outside.

But Mr Stone said Lane's sentencing had been delayed because he wanted to tell the Metropolitan Police about his crimes in London.

James Burley, defending, told Judge Ian Pringle that his client had seen his father die in a

"football riot" when he was just 14. After that, the barrister said, Lane had fallen into drug abuse and had now been a heroin addict for many years.

Judge Pringle said he took into account that Lane had expressed remorse and had been honest with the police about the crimes.

The burglaries were committed on January 24 at a house in Wharton Road, Headington; at a house in Henley Avenue, Iffley on March 25; at a house in Headley Way, Headington on April 10; at a house in Church Street, Chipping Norton, on April 13; at a house in Lidstone Road, Enstone, on April 29; at a house in South Newington on May 7; and in Churchill Road, Chipping Norton, on May 9.

Sixth formers get lowdown on council work

SIXTH formers at Banbury's special needs school Frank Wise have been given an insight into working for a council.

Cherwell District Council opened its doors to 24 students from the Hornbeam Close-based school for a tour, a chat with staff and even to let the youngsters try on uniforms.

The pupils, aged 16 to 19, learned about council functions, including waste and recycling, environmental health and leisure, as well as jobs available at its Bodicote headquarters.

Anthony Munday, of Frank Wise School, said: "The sheer level of effort and imagination that went in to hosting us was outstanding.

"Not only were the students made to feel especially welcome, a more importantly they experienced a detailed insight into the world of work and got up close and personal with many of the people who directly provide services to and for them."

Deputy leader George Reynolds said: "There is often a lot of confusion about the different services provided

by town, district and county councils so this gave us an opportunity to show exactly what goes on here at Cherwell.

"The students were able to recreate some of the council's work is carried out throughout the district."



Frank Wise pupils decked out in a range of council uniforms. From left, Aiden Tooley-Smith wears an environmental health uniform, Lucy Southam makes a model customer service official, and Samantha Shanks-Edwards plays the part of an environmental services officer.

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InBRIEF

Green views sought on HS2

■ RESIDENTS have until midnight tonight to give their views on the potential environmental impacts of the High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) route.

The Government has faced vocal opposition from residents and councils along the planned route, which crosses villages in North Oxfordshire including Finmere and Mixbury.

Residents are being asked to have their say on the measures identified for managing and reducing harm to the environment.

Visit hs2.org.uk to find out how to add an opinion.

Top attractions

■ FIVE Oxfordshire destinations have been named as top UK visitor attractions on a new tourism map.

They include: Banbury Museum and Tooley's Boatyard at Banbury Museum, as well as Blenheim Palace, Bicester Outlet Village and Broughton Castle.

They are all featured in the new South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership visitor map.

The map, launched last Thursday, will be distributed to tourism agencies across the UK and will be online at semlep.com

Masked men escape after raid on Co-operative store

TWO masked men robbed a Co-operative shop in Ferriston, Banbury, on Saturday.

At around 6am, the two raiders, one armed with a crowbars, forced staff to hand over money from the shop's safe.

It happened as members of staff were bringing in newspapers. The men escaped on foot.

It is not known how much money was taken. Police are appealing for witnesses.

One of the robbers is described as

being black, around 5ft 9in tall and of small build. He spoke with a Birmingham accent.

Investigating officer, Det Sgt Chris Whitwell, of Banbury CID, said: "This has been a stressful experience for the staff, who luckily were unhurt.

"There will be extra police patrols present in the area and a scene watch is currently in place.

"Anyone with information or concerns should contact us." Contact Det Sgt Whitwell on 101 or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Report reveals potential gas reserves across Oxfordshire

Safety fears over shale gas drilling in county

A VAST area of Oxfordshire, believed to contain shale gas reserves, has been singled out for the next round of onshore gas licensing by the Government.

The designated block is a triangular area between Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington, and has been identified as a possible source of shale gas by the British Geological Survey.

The controversial gas-extraction method of "fracking" could now be seen in north Oxfordshire, a process that campaigners claim can cause earth tremors.

Fracking involves pumping water, sand and chemicals at

By Reg Little

high pressure into underground rock to fracture it and release trapped gas.

Professor Stephen Hesselbo, of Oxford University's Earth Sciences department, said: "It has been known for more than 100 years that the Oxfordshire region is underlain by a variety of sedimentary rocks types, including shale and locally have generated gas.

"It is another question whether these strata have the attributes to be commercially viable for gas exploitation or not."

The Government is consulting on licensing a 900 sq km block of north Oxfordshire for gas exploration.

Two small earthquakes of 1.5 and 2.2 magnitude hit the Blackpool area following fracking, in the only investigative dig to have taken place.

Environmentalists have warned that drilling could scar the countryside, pollute water supplies, hit house prices and lead to roads clogged with lorries transporting equipment.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change said the focus on North Oxfordshire licences should be reported next year.

So far 176 licences for onshore oil and gas exploration have been issued across the UK and the Government says it expects "considerable interest from developers".

An anti-fracking campaign has already been launched in north Oxfordshire by Keith Taylor, Green MEP for Oxfordshire.

Mr Taylor said: "Residents of Oxfordshire are right to be

concerned about shale gas extraction. The fact is that fracking has serious environmental consequences.

"Only last week a study has shown that the drinking water near homes around fracking sites in Pennsylvania had been contaminated by methane, ethane and propane.

"Rather than paying communities to let corporations drill in their fields, the Government should be helping people set up local renewable energy production."

Paul Mobbs, a local environmental consultant, said: "Things have been pretty static up to now, but this may step-up a gear in the autumn, when the Government finalises its incentives for exploration and the new planning guidance on energy has been finalised."

According to energy expert Nicholas Newman, if an oil or gas company takes an interest in the gas reserves, it is possible that shale gas production could come to Oxfordshire in the next decade.

He said: "There is a lot of hype surrounding the issue, because it is new. If it is done to EU standards and regulations, it is no different in terms of safety from oil drilling.

"It could be commercially viable in Oxfordshire in ten years."

Banbury MP Sir Tony Baldry said: "Any fracking operations have to be safe and they can't be at the expense of local communities or the environment.

"There is a fairly substantial regulatory regime for fracking, including a new Office of Unconventional Gas and Oil



Keith Taylor in front of a protest banner

that will focus on the regulation of any explorations.

"This is in addition to existing regulatory consents, which require not only local authority consent for any fracking operation, but also environmental permits from the Environment Agency."

A Cherwell District Council spokesman said the authority was aware of potential shale gas

reserves.

He added: "The Government will shortly be publishing new planning guidance on onshore oil and gas, including shale gas and fracking. The council would consider any planning application against relevant national and local policy.

"We are not in discussion with any energy companies at the moment."

Police: A mobile phone is stolen every three hours

A MOBILE phone is stolen roughly once every three hours in Oxfordshire.

In 2012 more phones were stolen at Bicester Village than ever, while popular shopping streets in Oxford have also become magnets for phone thieves.

And while Nokia was once the most popular brand for thieves, the iPhone has now become the most prized haul.

Last year there were 1,058 iPhones alone stolen – three every day – and almost half of the entire total of the year's 2,677 thefts.

Kate Burrows, 31, had her iPhone stolen

last April, on her birthday.

She said: "It is a very high number of phones to be stolen. The trouble is that they are worth so much today."

Of all the phones stolen in 2012, only 125 (4.6 per cent) were recovered.

Between 2007, the year the iPhone was introduced, and 2012, there were 16,477 phone thefts recorded in Oxfordshire.

A further 930 thefts were reported to April this year, according to figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

Ms Burrows had her phone snatched at

her own 30th birthday party. Her iPhone was worth £500.

She said: "It was at a party and there were mainly friends and family there, which made it worse. As soon as I felt it was gone I borrowed a friend's phone to call it, but it was switched off, so I knew straight away it had been stolen.

"I was gutted, in tears. My life was on there; pictures, music, emails, everything. Phones today are like carrying a small computer around with you."

Her advice: "Get a phone card."

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■ Bid to increase county's Internet speed up to 24mbps

Council near to signing deal on fast broadband



OXFORDSHIRE County Council has said the end to the "frustrating" wait for superfast broadband investment is nearly over.

Bosses at county hall said they were "very close" to securing a contract and expected a decision to be made by the end of the month.

They said they were confident they would have superfast broadband speeds –

By Mark Taylor

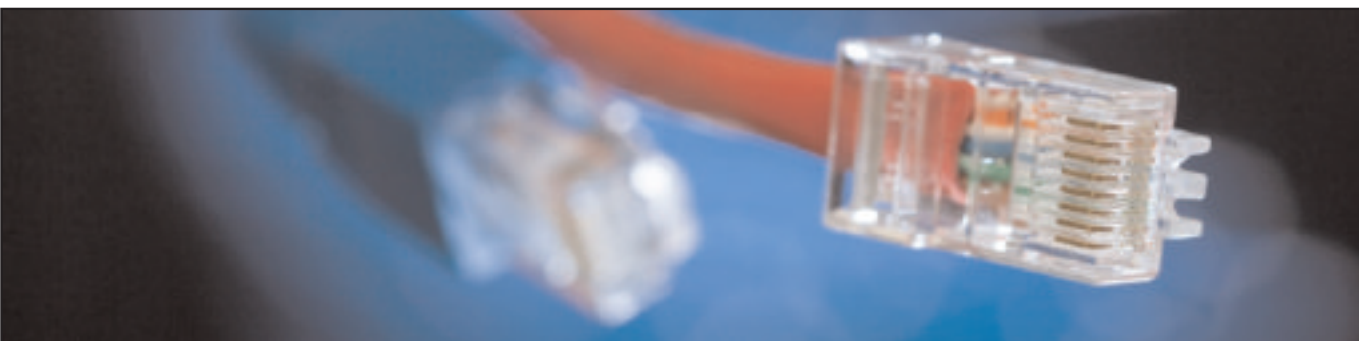
up to 24mbps – by 2015.

The £13.86m investment covers more than 65,000 extra premises across the county.

A spokesman said: "We are very conscious that securing this contract has taken a long time when broadband availability has become an even more important demand for all communities.

"However, the negotiation for a contract of this size and complexity has to be thorough and the time taken by us in competitive dialogue is in line with the other authorities who have undertaken the same exercise. We expect delivery will be carried out in defined phases over a two-year period, beginning in January 2014 – although considerable ground-survey work could be under way later this year."

Following a consultation exercise earlier this year, 21 per cent of the 6,032 residents who responded claimed to have connection speeds of less than 1mbps – among the slowest available. All of them, and 99 per cent of businesses who took part, said if they could, they would upgrade to a better connection.



InBRIEF

Fraud probes are revealed

■ **CHERWELL District** Council carried out 163 fraud investigations in 2012/13, which resulted in 15 people being taken to court, according to a report. The council said it identified £196,534 of fraudulently claimed benefits, including £19,912 relating to one person, in the last financial year. The Annual Governance Statement also said 72 residents used the council's fraud hotline to report people, 20 sent anonymous letters and 11 used its website.

Sponsor deal

■ **BANBURY-based** Formula One team Marussia has announced a sponsorship deal with Reading FC. The two sporting brands – which both have Russian owners – will promote one another on football shirts and the F1 cars. Marussia CEO Andy Webb said: "We are a Russian-owned team based on British soil, which is the basis for a great deal of synergy with our friends at Reading FC."

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Church Lane, Banbury

■ Drug addict, who had 25 previous convictions, admits £20,000 jewellery raid

Serial burglar is jailed



Colin Matley

A SERIAL burglar, who stole £20,000 of “irreplaceable” jewellery from an elderly couple, has been jailed.

Colin Matley, together with Michelle Bramham, both of Braithwaite Close, Banbury, admitted carrying out a break-in on March 19.

The couple were sentenced last Thursday at Oxford Crown Court after raiding the home of William and Pamela Dyer, who

By Banbury reporter

are both 87, in Westlands Avenue, Weston-on-the-Green, near Bicester.

Cathy Olliver, prosecuting, said pensioners Mr and Mrs Dyer had gone out to the dentist at around 9.45am when Matley, 30, broke in to their home through a kitchen window.

Bramham, 43, stayed in the

car to act as a “lookout and getaway driver”, the barrister told the court.

Miss Olliver said that together they escaped with around £20,000 of “irreplaceable” jewellery which Mr Dyer had bought for his wife, including a gold watch.

But the prosecutor said a neighbour saw Matley leaving the property and noted down the registration of their car.

When police caught up with

Matley, he tried to run away down Spiceball Park Road, in Banbury, but threw some of the jewellery into a canal.

Most was recovered, but around £2,500 worth of jewellery was either damaged or lost.

Graham Bennett, defending Matley, said his client – who had 25 previous convictions for 62 offences, including three burglaries – had a long-term addiction to Class-A drugs.

Defending Bramham, who had no previous convictions, Benjamin Long said she had not known the burglary was planned, but went along with it to get money for her partner's habit.

Judge Patrick Eccles sentenced Matley to three-and-a-half years in prison and gave Bramham a two-year sentence, suspended for 12 months, with 12 months of supervision and 200 hours of unpaid work.

Angus Oakey, Will Campion, Ethan Gould, Tim Mattinson, Matthew Bannister, Harry Rickard, Nathaniel Parker and Alex Ross



Having a ball!

SIBFORD School, Banbury, marked the end of the exam season with a Year 11 ball.

The event was organised by the students and was held in a special party tent on the school field. A Chinese noodle bar was on offer, provided by the school's catering team.

Oriental flying lanterns were launched into the sky at the end of the night.

Sibford headteacher Michael Goodwin said: “The Year 11s organised a delightful evening and it was a pleasure to share it with them. Well done to everyone involved.”



Kiera Ingram, Gabby Clack, Sophie Keningale, Lucy Breckon, Lucy Homer and Emma Rees



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Man who abused boys is sent to jail for five years

A MAN, who sexually abused two teenage boys, has been jailed for more than five years.

Stephen Isle, of Roper Road, Upper Heyford, admitted six counts of indecent assault, which took place between 1997 and 2001.

The 49-year-old appeared in Oxford Crown Court last week after he handed himself in to police on March 20.

Graham Smith, prosecuting, said the abuse only stopped when one of his victims told Isle he would kill himself.

Benjamin Long, defending, said: "That was when he realised that what he was doing was so serious that he

had to stop. He did not commit any further abuse against either of those young men after that remark."

Judge Patrick Eccles said: "I have read personal statements from the two victims and it is obvious they have been done significant harm by what you did.

"Who knows what the extent of the psychological and emotional damage will be in the years to come."

Judge Eccles jailed Isle for five years and three months and made him subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order, which bans unsupervised contact with children.



Stephen Isle, who was jailed for five years

InBRIEF

Council used 'covert' powers

■ OXFORDSHIRE County Council used its covert surveillance powers ten times in trading standards probes last year. It used the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 for probes into doorstep crime, underage sales, "misdescribed" car sales and counterfeit goods. It also accessed phone data eight times in 2012/13, to trace people, websites and email addresses and to get call records.

■ More time for comments

U-turn is urged on school bus fees

By Freddie Whittaker

TRANSPORT chiefs have been asked to go back to the drawing board with plans to shake up school bus fees.

Last week the county council's education scrutiny committee called on the cabinet to review plans to withdraw free transport from families who don't choose to send their children to their nearest school.

The proposals, which would have saved the council £340,000 a year, and a consultation on the plans were criticised by councillors from across the political divide.

Every council has a legal duty to provide free home-to-school transport for children if their nearest school is more than three miles away, providing those three miles constitute a safe walking route.

At the moment, Oxfordshire school children receive free transport even if their parents have chosen a school further away than their nearest choice.

But officers wanted that to change.

The deadline for responses to the original consultation, which was launched at the beginning of June, has been extended until July 15, after more than 1,700 people responded.

But councillors said plans for the cabinet to make a decision on July 16 would come too soon



Melinda Tilley

after that deadline, and that rushing through the changes could lead to a legal challenge.

One councillor, Yvonne Constance, said: "To be told that a substantive report would be made available between this meeting and the decision on July 16 does not impress me. If I was on the other side of this, I would be heading straight to a Judicial Review.

Councillor Simon Hoare said: "For all of this work and for all of this palaver, we are only going to be saving £340,000. It doesn't seem worth it to me."

Cabinet member for schools, Melinda Tilley, said: "We need to look at what they have said, that's the point of scrutiny committees. But what the outcome of that will be I just don't know."

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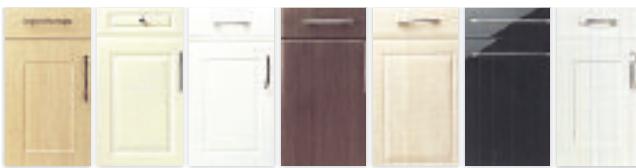
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InBRIEF**Official death toll revealed**

■ OFFICIAL figures from the the Department for Transport reveal that 28 people died in road accidents in Oxfordshire last year. As reported in January, the number was an increase of two on 2011's figure of 26. Oxfordshire had 307 people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on its roads in 2012. The number was 48 fewer than the 355 KSIs in 2011.

Planning view

■ VIEWS are being sought on Cherwell District Council's policy on what information must be submitted when making a planning application. Views are sought on its local validation checklist like drawings and fees. To respond, visit tinyurl.com/nnwe34d or call Rebekah Morgan on 01295 221822.

Sporting facts

■ NEW figures have shown that the number of people playing sport in Oxfordshire has stayed the same, despite increases in most regions across the South East. The figures released by Sport England reveal that 36 per cent of people in the region are participating in at least one moderate intensity sport session per week.

■ 2,400 snaps are taken by the county's motorists

Pictures of potholes pour in for council



Taxi driver Colin Dobson points out more potholes

REPAIRMEN have fixed more than 15,000 potholes across Oxfordshire after the launch of a scheme giving people the power to report broken roads.

Months of cold weather and flooding over the winter left the county's roads in poor condition.

In March, Oxfordshire County Council launched the "fix my street" initiative, which allows residents to report potholes via the Internet.

As part of the push, the county council poured another £250,000 into its budget for repairing roads.

Since then, residents have sent more than 2,400 images of potholes to the county council.

County council spokesman Martin Crabtree said: "The success of the scheme is illustrated, in part, in the figures.

"As you will see if you visit Fix My Street, people are continuing to use it as a way of reporting a range of defects on the roads."

Mr Crabtree said the county council had an average of 30 gangs

By Damian Fantato

a day filling potholes.

The council has pledged to fill most potholes within 28 days.

However, taxi driver Colin Dobson said there was still a long way to go in repairing the county's roads.

He said: "I have not really noticed any significant difference and I don't think the roads are appreciably better.

"A lot of the potholes that I have been moaning about for quite some time have been fixed but there are still some pretty bad examples."

A total of 15,439 repairs have been made since the start of March – an average of nearly 4,000 a month, above the target of 3,000 the council set itself.

Between April 2012 and March 2013 the council repaired more than 37,837 potholes across the county.

Visit oxfordshire.gov.uk/report or phone 0845 3101111.

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Departs 15 Nov 2013

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- Visit to the Lumiere Festival in Durham
- Visit to the Metrocentre
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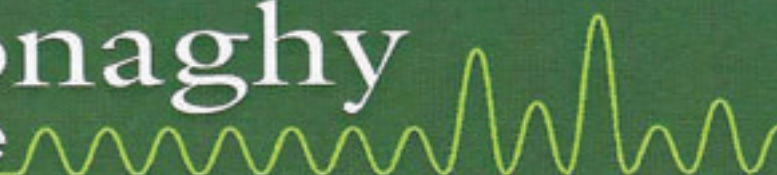
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Something for everyone after summer's gone

By Liz Nicholls

Although the sun is now blazing, those who like to get ahead are in a for a treat thanks to a packed programme ahead at Northampton's Royal & Derngate.

From the end of summer to Christmas and beyond, there is another wide-ranging programme of music, comedy, drama, dance and family shows in the pipeline.

Following a run of national acclaim for recent productions, the Made In Northampton season continues with the world stage premiere of *To Sir, With Love* starring Matthew Kelly, followed by a festive production of *The Wind In The Willows*. Taking to the Derngate stage for – wait for it – Christmas, Linda Lusardi and Sam Kane star in the theatre's family pantomime *Sleeping Beauty*.

There are performances this autumn from two of the leading lights of dance, Peter Schaufuss Ballet and Richard Alston Dance Company and an orchestral season beginning with the Annual Malcolm Arnold Weekend. The pick of the touring musicals and drama includes *Cats*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Mansfield Park* and *A Passionate Woman*.



The Wind In The Willows



Rumours

Acker Bilk, Petula Clark and Alison Moyet head up a bevy of visiting musical icons, while laughs come courtesy of Jack Dee, Paul Merton, Sean Lock and Ardal O'Hanlon, to name but a few.

The first Made in Northampton production of the autumn is the world premiere of Ayub Khan Din's brilliant stage adaptation of *To Sir, With Love*, a co-production with the Touring Consortium Theatre Company, on the Royal stage in September, before touring nationwide. Some of the best touring drama includes a new

production of Agatha Christie's *Go Back For Murder* in October and family affairs and romantic entanglements beset *Mansfield Park*'s young Fanny Price.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's extraordinary smash-hit *Cats* (September–October) opens a sensational season of musicals. *Thriller Live* moonwalks into Derngate from October 28 and *Buddy* returns to Northampton in November.

Top comedians of all stripes are set to visit over the coming months, beginning with master miserabilist Jack Dee, returning to stand-up after a six-year absence. Stewart Lee road-tests a mixed stew of unrelated ideas, king of the one-liners Stewart Francis is joined by fellow Canadians Craig Campbell and Glenn Wool as The Lumberjacks and there will be more funny business from Paul Merton, Ed Byrne, Al Murray, Sean Lock, Lee Nelson, Trevor Noah, Sarah Millican and Russell Kane – phew!

And, as that's not enough, initiate Northampton into *Puppetry Of The Penis* and *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy Radio Show Live!* returns. Something for everyone, then!

■ For more, call 01604 624811 or visit royalandderngate.co.uk



Linda Lusardi and Sam Kane star in *Sleeping Beauty*

All-female version is not the Odd one out

Banbury Cross Players' forthcoming production is an especially unusual one – a female version of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple*.

Opening next Wednesday (July 17), at The Mill Arts Centre and running until July 20, the play tells the story of six sassy American ladies who meet once a week at Olive's home to eat, drink and play Trivial Pursuit.

Olive, against the advice of friends, takes pity on Florence when she is abandoned by her husband and invites her to stay. Olive (a self confessed slob) soon discovers that Florence (a stickler for detail) has habits that would try the patience of a saint. Two attractive, fun-loving Spanish men who live upstairs add increased complications in this laugh out loud comedy.

Director Liz Riley says: "We have enjoyed graphing our personal archives of photographs to see what we were wearing and doing with our hair back in the 1980s!



"We've even devoted rehearsal time to reminding ourselves of the rules of Trivial Pursuit!"

"Girl Power" 1980s style is the order of the day in this updated version of the brilliant Neil Simon film and stage play. ■ Banbury Cross Players' all-female version of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* starts at 7.45pm next Wednesday at The Mill, Banbury. Call the Mill box office for tickets on 01295 279 002 or visit themillartscentre.co.uk

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TAKING THE TIME Unique, easygoing and fun-loving Trowbridge woman, 41, loves clubs, the seaside and a happy life in general, would like to meet a dark, decent man, for a loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143389 or send a text to 80360

SEE ME SMILE Happy, quiet, caring and reliable Oxford lady, 42, 5'2", simply searching for a tactile, fun and gentle-natured gent, for friendship, lasting happiness and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 142441 or send a text to 80360

ENJOY AND SHARE LIFE Attractive, divorced Melskham lady, 45, 5'5", red hair, green eyes, grown up children, loves the outdoors, travel, animals and family life, seeking a genuine guy, 40-50, for true romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 138266 or send a text to 80360

QUALITY TIMES Sunny, loving, Trowbridge female, 46, 5'5", brown hair, green eyes, grown up children, loves the outdoors, travel, animals and family life, seeking a genuine guy, 40-50, for true romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 138116

TRY AND SEE Fun, blue-eyed Witney girl, 46, active and easygoing, enjoys swimming and keep fit, searching for a kind, caring and genuine guy, to share loving times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 144409 or send a text to 80360

IT COULD BE US Spiritual, genuine Didcot woman, 47, attractive, fun, have grown up children, likes clubs, cafes, music, films, walking and reading, seeking a caring and optimistic man, for friendship first. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132828 or send a text to 80360

I NEED A HERO Charming, positive Trowbridge female, 47, 5'2", brunette, fun-loving, likes balance and harmony in her life, searching for that special guy. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145473 or send a text to 80360

TOP OF THE CLASS Enthusiastic, cultured and vibrant Melskham woman, 49, 5'5", looking for an enthusiastic, vibrant gent, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 138880 or send a text to 80360

SMOOTH MOVE Slim, blue-eyed Trowbridge female, 49, 5'2", GSOH, easy to get on with, enjoys nights out, walks and more, searching for an honest, active, interesting man. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 109958 or send a text to 80360

SHARING THE GOOD TIMES Fun-loving, affectionate and interesting Swindon female, 50, searching for a fair, upbeat man, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101568

DIVE INTO MY LIFE Active, fit, good looking Norton female, 51, good sense of humour, enjoys swimming, walking my dog, seeking a kind, genuine man, for a close relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 141137 or send a text to 80360

LOOKING FOR MR RIGHT Attractive, fun, easygoing Cotswold female, 57", enjoys swimming and staying active, would like to meet an honest, caring male for a loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145546

START LIVING AGAIN Friendly, fun Oxfordshire divorced mum, 52, 5'7", grown up children, looking for love again and someone to share life with. Is the right man out there for me? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 798804

TO THE FUTURE Flexible, life-loving, optimistic, divorced Abingdon lady, 53, 5'7", non-smoker, wants to meet a feisty, adventurous gentleman, 44-54 for friendship, hopefully leading to committed relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 138484

HAVE YOUR CAKE Caring and confident Kenyan lady, 53, 5'9", would like to meet a warm and genuine man, for happy times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145300 or send a text to 80360

SOMEONE EXACTLY LIKE YOU Caring, lovely, bubbly Bicester lady, 54, looking for a tall, kind, caring and romantic man for a lasting loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 118921 or send a text to 80360

A DEEP CONNECTION Big, bubbly Swindon lady, 55, black, GSOH, caring, enjoys music, reading, going out & cinema, looking to meet a like-minded white guy, 40-50, kind, loyal and fun, for a true relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115425

THAT SPECIAL PERSON Honest, bubbly female, 56, kind, loving, seeks 6ft+ male, for romance, companionship & lots more. Bicester. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 110670

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FIRENDS FIRST Intelligent, attractive Witshire female, 57, widow, brunette, 5'2", likes radio 4, reading, travel, art galleries and gym, new to area and seeking a similar guy, GSOH, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 124892 or send a text to 80360

MEANINGFUL TIMES Active, outgoing Trowbridge female, 58, loves cinema, seaside, travelling and animals, would like to meet a man for company leading to a possible relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117215 or send a text to 80360

HOME LOVER Loyal Bicester lady, 60, 5'4", searching for an honest, hard-working and affectionate man, for great times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 144576 or send a text to 80360

STRIKE A CHORD WITH ME Active and honest Abingdon female, 60, 5'4", enjoys reading, gardening and the natural things in life, searching for a nice man, to share life with, for friendship first and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 144897 or send a text to 80360

THE LONG TERM Separated, easygoing Oxon female, 61, likes cooking, evenings in/out and much more, seeks friendly male, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100451

SEEKING THE RIGHT MAN Separated, attractive Witney female, 61, 5'2", curvy, likes cooking, evenings in/out and much more, seeks friendly male, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128289

GENUINE AND CARING Oxfordshire widow, 61, 5'6", slender build, sociable, caring and well-travelled, searching for a genuine, professional guy, non-smoker, for friendship, maybe lasting love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 466487

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LOVE IS FOR SHARING Easygoing, sincere Trowbridge lady, 61, med build, 5'6", GSOH, N/S, enjoys good social life, darts, music, walking & reading, searching for that special guy, N/S and caring for dates & more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 116161

LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU Smart, intelligent Swindon lady, 62, N/S, likes country & riverside strolls, atmospheric country pubs, gardening, 60s-70s music, would like to meet a gent, 62-68, 5'10", N/S for companionship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143526 or send a text to 80360

LET'S ENJOY LIFE Vibrant, sincere Witney female, 63, loves meeting people, good conversations, going out & about, walks, theatre, looking for a similar chap, for companionship and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 142189

COMPLETE THE PICTURE Attractive, honest Swindon lady, 65, 5'5", loves cinema, theatre, national trust, walks, would like to meet a tall, non-smoking gent, under 70 with a GSOH. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 140415 or send a text to 80360

HONEST RELATIONSHIP Non-smoking Bradford lady, 66, 5'5", slim-build, blue-eyes with a positive outlook, enjoy countryside, dancing, music, theatre, seeking a gent, 65-68, to enjoy similar interest. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128404 or send a text to 80360

DAYS OUT SENSITIVE Genuine, widowed Warrminster female, 67, would like to meet an active, outgoing male, for friendship, days out together and laughter. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 146185 or send a text to 80360

HIT THE JACKPOT Sincere Swindon lady, 77, enjoys dancing, pubs lunches, theatre and more, searching for a nice gent, with similar interests, for friendship and perhaps more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145190 or send a text to 80360

HONEST COMPANY SOUGHT Kind, caring Oxford female, 78, likes country drive, pub lunches, fishing, seeking a tall man, with a good sense of humour, to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143588 or send a text to 80360

BLOSSOM WITH TLC Attractive Abingdon widow, 80, would like to meet a non-smoking, active gent, to enjoy days out and cosy times in. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 139676

SHARE SOME TIME Adaptable, upbeat and optimistic Oxford man, 33, would like to find a warm, laid-back girl, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 134837

TIME TO SHARE Lively Oxford male, 39, 5'10", med build, enjoys motorbikes, clubs, cinema, meals and more, searching for a loving woman, to share friendship and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117999 or send a text to 80360

NOW OR NEVER Practical, affable and dependable Oxford male, 39, likes eating out at restaurants, swimming and cycling, seeking a truthful, intelligent, informed lady, for fun and maybe a little romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 131282 or send a text to 80360

PERFECT HARMONY Fun-loving, easygoing, tactile Witney biker, 41, 6ft, stocky build, shaven head and goatee, seeks fun loving, cheeky lady to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108035

GOOD COMPANIONSHIP Confident, friendly Wantage male, 44, 6'4", green eyes, likes cooking, sports, cinema, looking to meet a black lady, 26-42, to enjoy good company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 141512 or send a text to 80360

ENERGIZER TIME Honest, friendly and charming Oxford male, 45, 6'3", stocky build, great sense of humour, enjoys sport, travel, cosy times and social drinks, seeking a fun-loving female, for happier times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101716 or send a text to 80360

LOTS TO OFFER Smart, curious and constructive Oxford male, 46, 6'2", would like to meet an interesting, active girl, to build a lasting, happy future with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 146182 or send a text to 80360

COME CLOSER Active, kind-hearted and upbeat Oxford bloke, 46, 6'3", looking to find an insightful, liberal woman, for fun and maybe a little romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 130080

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FUN AND ADVENTURE Professional, caring male, 46, 5'9", N/S, own home and car, enjoys days out to the seaside, seeking young-at-heart, honest lady, to spend quality time with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 146399 or send a text to 80360

HOPE SPRINGS Eternal Kind, caring, down-to-earth Thame male, 47, enjoys music, country walks, cooking, reading, films, seeking a kind, sincere, slim female, 25+. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143747 or send a text to 80360

OFFER ME YOUR LOVE Happy go lucky Windsor male, 47, enjoys cooking, walks, tennis, swimming and theatre, looking for a long term relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 126273

LOTS TO GIVE Easygoing, reliable, loyal Bicester male, 48, 5'7", divorcee, varied interests and enjoys the outdoor life, looking for someone, to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143400 or send a text to 80360

JUST HAVE FUN Affectionate, warmhearted Banbury male, 49, would like to meet fun, bright female to enjoy each others company and share laughter and good times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145726 or send a text to 80360

ACCEPT EACH OTHER Easygoing Wantage male, 51, own car, works full-time, likes most sports, would like to meet an outgoing female, for good times leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143164 or send a text to 80360

LOVE TO HAVE A LAUGH Hardworking Oxford male, 51, 5'7", brown hair, own flat, likes socialising, cooking, nights in, seeks nice young lady for friendship leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 121027 or send a text to 80360

GET TO THE GOOD TIMES Separated, laid-back Bicester guy, 51, 5'10", brown hair/brown eyes, decent build, self-employed, looking for an attractive woman. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 136282 or send a text to 80360

LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH Friendly, warm-hearted Abingdon male, 51, good sense of humour, would like to meet a caring, well-matured girl, to enjoy good times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115894

PURE KINDNESS Blue-eyed Bicester male, 52, 5'10", own home, self-employed, searching for a loving African woman, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 144560 or send a text to 80360

GOOD NATURED Upbeat Bicester male, 52, 5'10", brown hair, own home, medium build, looking for an attractive, black lady, for friendship and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 140492 or send a text to 80360

TIME FOR A CHANGE Friendly, expressive and vibrant Kidlington male, 52, with plenty of interests in life, would like to meet a life-loving, interesting lady, to share love, laughter and the future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 114479

ALL TO LOVE Kind and caring Oxfordshire male, 53, brown hair, green eyes, GSOH, searching for a nice, genuine girl, for friendship first, then maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 146128

TAKE CHARGE Bright, humorous and optimistic Banbury man, 53, would like a date with a chatty, active woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132836

SHARING GOOD TIMES Upbeat Burford widower, 58, own cars, works full time, likes days in and out, countryside walks, driving, looking for a similar woman for companionship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117916 or send a text to 80360

CARING NATURE Dependable, informed and responsible Witney man, 59, 6'3", looking for a helpful, decent woman, to share a brighter future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 111595

PASSION FLOWER Youthful, friendly Oxford chap, 59, 5'9", dark hair, enjoys cinema, bowling, active days out and socialising, searching for a loving, happy and loyal woman, to build a lasting relationship with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101122 or send a text to 80360

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PERFECT TOGETHER Hard-working Oxfordshire male, 60, 6ft, widower, greying hair, smart, likes most things in life, now searching for an equally honest and genuine woman, to share love, life and true happiness. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 142767 or send a text to 80360

DECISION IS YOURS Honest, easygoing Yorksire man living in Banbury, 60, 5'6", slim build, self-employed, likes gardening, cooking, cinema, travel, countryside, seeks genuine lady, to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 140930 or send a text to 80360

LONG LASTING HAPPINESS Fairly fit Banbury man, 61, 5'11", fair-hair, blue-eyes, works as electrician, looking for a nice lady around the same age, for friendship possibly leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 122384

SEE FOR YOURSELF Youthful, faithful, liberal and sympathetic Middlesbrough man, 72, looking for a sweet, sensitive woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 141502 or send a text to 80360

SOUL TO SOUL Divorced Oxford guy, 78, looks younger, N/S, fit & active, easygoing nature, likes crosswords, meals out, cosy nights in, WLTm a charming, bubbly female, to spend some quality time with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100937

SO GOOD TOGETHER Genuine, easygoing, happy Abingdon male, 62, own home/car, enjoys dancing, days out and walking the dog, searching for a genuine lady, with an attractive and happy nature. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 466085

JUST AN ORDINARY Kind-hearted, considerate and loving Didcot man, 67, would like a date with an old-fashioned, intuitive lady, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 456285

A FRIEND INDEED Semi-retired Oxford male, 67, 6', slim-build, likes playing bowls, home life, seeking an easygoing female, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137812

OPEN YOUR HEART Cheerful, slim Banbury male, 70, 5'6", GSOH, likes sport, walks, animals and cosy times, searching for a decent lady, to settle down with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104901 or send a text to 80360

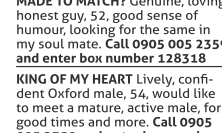


Women seeking men

HOPE THIS WORKS Cuddly Swindon lady, 47, easygoing and fun to be with, looking for friendship leading to more with a nice, friendly, bubbly woman. Where are you? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 851817

BE THERE FOR ME Honest, caring Wiltshire woman, 52, seeking straight female friends, for socialising, outings and good company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 113955

LUCKY CHARM Serious, lovable and imaginative Malmesbury lady, 55, simply searching for an independent, free-thinking girl, for a special and lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 134242 or send a text to 80360



Men seeking women

MADE TO MATCH? Genuine, loving, honest guy, 52, good sense of humour, looking for the same in my soul mate. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128318

KING OF MY HEART Lively, confident Oxford male, 54, would like to meet a mature, active male, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 135675

MAKE A CONNECTION Interesting, friendly Oxford male, 64, varied interests, loves walks, reading, travel and more, seeks sensitive male, similar age, for a loving relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 857624

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW... Easygoing, friendly Didcot male, 66, enjoys walks, theatre, cosy times in, socialising, seeks a friendly, active chap, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 131800 or send a text to 80360

FROM THIS MOMENT Friendly, easygoing, fit Witney chap, 68, would like to meet an affectionate male, for company, companionship and hopefully more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 143904 or send a text to 80360

LET'S EXPLORE Abingdon male, 69, 5'9", medium build, easygoing and affectionate, looking for someone similar, to share fun and good times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 453567 or send a text to 80360

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Film shuffles the pack for that magical ending

NOW YOU SEE ME (12A, 115 mins)
Thriller/Action. Jesse Eisenberg, Isla Fisher, Woody Harrelson, Dave Franco, Mark Ruffalo, Melanie Laurent, Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman. Director: Louis Letterier.

Nothing is what it seems in Louis Letterier's high-stakes game of cat and mouse between four crowd-pleasing Las Vegas illusionists and the FBI.

Every narrative twist could be a double-bluff, every failure a carefully orchestrated diversion and every flirtation a calculated exercise in audience manipulation.

Screenwriters Ed Solomon, Boaz Yakin and Edward Ricourt hold all the aces and for the opening 30 minutes, their collective sleight of hand dazzles and intrigues in equal measure. *Now You See Me* sets up the tricks, engineers them with elan and coolly reveals the ingenious method behind the on-stage madness.

Alas, when it comes to the grand final illusion, which takes up most of the second hour, director Letterier doesn't play entirely fair.

He untethers the plot from plausibility and logic, allowing everything to teeter risibly on coincidence, physical improbability and outrageous good fortune. We might just forgive the script its outlandishness if a tongue was wedged firmly in cheek, but the film is deadly serious about its jiggery pokery.

The prologue introduces us to close-up conjurer Daniel Atlas

(Jesse Eisenberg), escapologist Henley Reeves (Isla Fisher), mentalist Merrit McKinney (Woody Harrelson) and street magician Jack Wilder (Dave Franco), who are successful in their own fields, dazzling small audiences with their showmanship.

Each performer receives a Tarot card bearing the same information: "March 29, 4:44pm 45 East Evan St. NY, NY"

As instructed, the quartet arrives at an apartment in New York, where a dazzling light show reveals an illusion that will stun the world.

One year later, Daniel, Henley, Merrit and Jack are reborn as The Four Horsemen.

In front of a live audience, they choose an audience member at random and magically transport their stooge to a bank in Paris to raid millions from the vault.

With their sponsor Arthur Tressler (Michael Caine) and renowned sceptic Thaddeus Bradley (Morgan Freeman) watching in the aisles, Daniel, Henley, Merrit and Jack pull off this seemingly impossible feat.

Within hours, they are under arrest and facing interrogation by FBI Agent Dylan Rhodes (Mark Ruffalo), who doesn't want the case, nor the added distraction of Interpol agent Alma Dray (Melanie Laurent).

The cops quickly learn that they underestimate the magicians at their peril.

Ignore the gaping plot holes and *Now You See Me* is a lot of fun. The script trades heavily on the sniping banter between the four magicians,



A scene from *Now You See Me*, with Dave Franco, as Jack Wilder; Jesse Eisenberg, as J Daniel Atlas, Isla Fisher, as Henley Reeves and Woody Harrelson as Merrit McKinney

Picture:
PA Photo/
Entertainment
One

who always seem to be one step ahead of Rhodes and the authorities.

Action scenes are orchestrated at full pelt, including an explosive car chase and a night-time race across rooftops.

The film's pivotal nugget of information becomes blindingly obvious well before Letterier engineers the big reveal – but it doesn't greatly temper our enjoyment, simply giving us more time to piece everything together.

CakeWhat's on

Music

FRIDAY: General Foods SC, Spiceball Park, Banbury: The Summits. Male mixed covers duo. Free admission.

01295252852.9:00pm

Muskateer, Ruscombe Avenue, Banbury: Resurrection Duo. Rock and pop covers duo. Free admission. 9pm. 01295269296.

SATURDAY:

St Mary's Church, Horsefair, Banbury: Help for Heroes charity concert. Banbury Symphony Orchestra and the Rotary Club of Banbury offer a programme of music to honour fallen heroes, including *The Dambusters March*, *633 Squadron* and *Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture*. Chief technician Dave Lewis (Help for Heroes co-ordinator) will speak. £10, child £4. Tickets from One Man Band in White Lion Walk, the Banbury Tourist Information Centre, or may be purchased at the door if available.

7.30-9.30pm. 01608 645589.

The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: The Doors

Alive. British tribute band to The Doors. £16, conc £14. 7.45pm. 01608 642350.

Theatre

The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park, Banbury:

Jul 12, *Andrew Lawrence Is Coming To Get You*. As seen on BBC 1's *Live at the Apollo*, now a regular on Channel 4's *Stand Up For the Week*, Andrew Lawrence is back on the road following a sell-out 50-date tour of the UK.

Audiences can expect an evening of top class stand-up. £12, concession £10. 7.30pm.

Jul 13, Fiona Malena, Flamenco Company. Flamenco is passion, heat and rhythm. Direct from Sevilla, the homeland of Flamenco in Spain this exciting group come to Oxfordshire as part of their first UK tour. 7.30pm. £15 to include a glass of Sangria, under-12s £7.

Jul 17-20, *The Odd Couple* (female version). Olive Madison, divorced and living in cheerful chaos in her New York apartment and newly separated, suicidal Florence decide to lodge together.

Florence's obsessive habits soon take their toll on Olive whose only remedy (two brothers from Barcelona) backfires – disastrously and hilariously. 7.45pm. £8.50. (No admittance after curtain-up.) Banbury Cross Players.

Box office: 01295 279002.

The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton:

Jul 12, *The Wizard of Oz*. Presented by St Mary's School. £5. 7.30pm.

Jul 13, The Doors Alive. A great British tribute band widely regarded as the closest and most enthralling representation of the legendary 1960's rock gods The Doors. 7.45pm.

Jul 14, screening of Mozart's opera, *Le Nozze Di Figaro* (recorded July 2012). 7pm. Michael Grandage's production of this opera has particular significance, as it was the first ever to be performed at Glyndebourne in 1934, with festival co-founder Audrey Mildmay in the role of Susanna. In Italian, subtitled. £15. Box office: 01608 642350.

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Golden debut for Mini

LIAM Doran won gold at the Munich XGames in his Banbury-built Prodrive Mini RX on the car's competition debut – and then followed this up with silver in the second final.

Prodrive felt the short Munich circuit would suit the Mini, and so it proved. Doran was the fastest qualifier and heat winner, and started from the front of the grid in the wet and slippery conditions. A great start saw him hold off all the cars into the first corner.

Despite losing the lead shortly after, he was able to regain first position and then pull out a comfortable advantage. A puncture with three laps to go saw the tyre slowly coming away from the rim, but he was able to maintain his lead and clinch a debut victory for the Mini RX.

The Sunday final saw Doran as the heat winner again, but this time started the final, held in the dry, from

By David Duffy

the outside of the front row. Even so he was still able to take the lead into the first corner. An impact shortly after bent the rear toe arm on the Mini meaning he spent the remaining laps with the left rear wheel pointing in the wrong direction. Despite this he maintained second position and collected a silver medal.

Doran said: "I guess I was disappointed not to win the second final too, but still it now means I have got two different coloured medals."

"It's been a great weekend and we've come away with far more than I expected in a brand new car against the best drivers in the world. The car was really good, the team worked hard and I can't wait to get to the US."

The 1.6-litre engine Mini RX was competing against 2.0-litre cars and

despite giving away about 100 horsepower, the Mini clearly demonstrated the value of the WRC-proven chassis in rallycross.

Richard Taylor, Prodrive business development director, said: "We knew if we could get our nose ahead at the first corner then we should be able to hold off the rest of the pack."

"Liam was unfortunate to damage his rear toe arm in the second race, otherwise it could possibly have been two wins from two. I think we have proven a point here that power isn't everything and I have a feeling we could soon be getting a few calls."

Prodrive has been developing this first Mini RX with Liam Doran as it looks to enter the rallycross market for the first time. It now intends to start selling the Mini RX to customers.

The car will head to the USA for two further rounds of the Global Rallycross Championship and the Los Angeles X Games.



The Prodrive Mini RX pictured in action

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ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

Sometimes it's hard to say how you feel for fear of hurting other peoples' feelings. This week, however, you're given the gift of social skills from Mercury the planet of communication. Why not try using it on that elder family member you've found it impossible to agree with of late? A happier future awaits you both if you do. Call to hear why I know this is the right time to kick bad habits.

0906 585 4360

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

Meet life with love and you will find love in life. Holding on to the memory of someone who only ever brought you pain is stopping you from moving on as you should, and need to. Solo business ventures put a spring in your step as you start to realise how much more able you are than a certain face led you to believe. Ring now to hear why it's good to wear your heart on your sleeve on Sunday.

0906 585 4366

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

Don't believe gossip and idle chatter and more importantly don't pass it on or you could end up being accused of starting it. Home matters are highlighted and if you're looking to buy or sell this week then you have the power of the stars to get the best deal. Virgos make more of an error you made than is really necessary. Ignore them. Phone me to get the best from your stars.

0906 585 4361

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

News of a major change or break up in your circle forces you to question your own life, where you're going and what you want. Just bear in mind that what you're doing at the moment is experimenting to see what fits well with you so don't be cornered into making commitments which aren't yet necessary. Call now to hear how Venus shocks you with the new feelings she opens you up to.

0906 585 4367

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

You can't make people do what you want, but you can make sure that you don't allow yourself to be manipulated anymore. Not only are you losing respect from those around you, you're also doing irreparable damage to your self confidence. New faces in your career are more important to your future than you could imagine. Call now to better understand Saturn's interfering actions.

0906 585 4362

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

A better understanding of the way a younger person's mind works help you to realise that you were wrong to end up losing friends and finances. We all make mistakes, but it's a far braver person who admits what they've done wrong and learns from it, than one who carries on regardless. Love waits in familiar places you visit. Phone me now so we can look at your future together.

0906 585 4368

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

Media links are lucky for you and you may find yourself promoting something on behalf of a close one or kick starting a business project which has come to have a personal meaning to you. Problems in the home prove pricey, but are a worthy expense. Sacrifice elsewhere, you'll thank me when you see the long term security it gives you Cancer. Phone now to hear why you must slow the pace in romance.

0906 585 4363

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

You need to fill in some blanks if you are to come across as a professional in this month's meetings. Don't be afraid to ask questions and to say if you don't understand something. How else are you supposed to learn my friend? Travel plans cause much excitement but also dictate that you start to save more than you spend. Phone now to hear why you must trust your instincts with family.

0906 585 4369

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

The written word is more important than usual and many of you Leos should find yourself having to write down things which will dictate where your future is going and where you want. Party invites have a hidden agenda to them as you should find out if you can find the courage to ask questions. Give me a call now to hear why you must not argue with work contacts this week.

0906 585 4364

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

You're finding it hard to tell the truth recently, but unless you come clean this week then you're going to end up losing friends and finances. We all make mistakes, but it's a far braver person who admits what they've done wrong and learns from it, than one who carries on regardless. Love waits in familiar places you visit. Phone me now so we can look at your future together.

0906 585 4370

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

You think you're not equipped to deal with what's ahead of you, when in fact you have all of the tools you need to shape your life to your desires. Your element of earth is making it hard for you to let go of a past issue which has already impeded a good relationship in your life. Phone now to hear why it's worth dressing in clothing which boosts your confidence and sell esteem this week.

0906 585 4365

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

Don't let a paranoid attitude affect decisions which you've made for this month. Things you back out of over the coming days you will come to regret. New flirtations turn serious from Tuesday and it's time to ask yourself if you're ready to take relationships more seriously from here on in. Give me a call now to hear why it's worth working harder at work this week.

0906 585 4371



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In Memoriam

Bernadette Stoddart



11th July 2011

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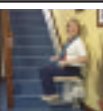
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Cake Motoring

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Striking Mini GP delivers smiles

By David Duffy

NEITHER the teeth-rattling ride, nor the roaring road noise from the fat tyres were enough to wipe the smile off the face of my young passenger.

After a 40-mile evening ride around the winding by-ways of West Oxfordshire, my 19-year-niece Chloe's verdict on the sportiest, fastest production Mini ever built was: "I want one."

And not even an explanation of the cost, the horrendous insurance premium and the fact that only 2,000 of this limited edition model have been made, could put her off.

The two-seater John Cooper Works GP has the word sports firmly bolted on to every part of the car, from the two specially-stitched Recaro seats, to the 17-inch alloy wheels shod with sticky Kumho tyres.

Slip into that seat, grip the thick-rimmed, leather-trimmed John Cooper Works steering wheel and push the start button and you are enveloped in an anthracite and black-lined bubble of rumbling, racetrack-inspired noise.

The gearshift knob with chrome ring and red shift diagram is a flick-of-the-wrist affair, swiftly whisking the little car through six gears.

Ahead of you sits a large rev counter and, crucially, a digital

speed read-out — a vital accessory with an engine capable of taking the car to a potential top speed of 148mph.

That engine is an extensively-modified, 1.6-litre four-cylinder, twin-turbo unit capable of developing 218 horsepower. Helping to keep that formidable power under control is a mix of adjustable suspension and an extra-powerful sports brake system.

The GP screams power from miles away. Mini says the aerodynamic body parts like the large front and rear aprons, striking side sills and model-specific roof spoiler not only add to the eye-catching appearance, but also play an important part in controlling air flow.

The company also says the rear diffuser, together with the underside panelling and the roof-edge spoiler, reduce lift forces at the rear axle by 90 per cent, for impeccable handling.

Auto facts

Model: Mini John Cooper Works GP
Price: £28,790
Insurance group: 36 (1-50)
Fuel consumption (Combined): 39.8mpg
Top speed: 148mph
Length: 375.8cm/148in
Width: 168.3cm/66.2in
0-100kph (62mph) time: 6.3 seconds
Fuel tank capacity: 11 gallons/50 litres
CO2 emissions: 165g/km
Warranty: 3 years/unlimited mileage



Power packed: The Mini JCW GP is powered by a 1.6-litre twin-turbo petrol engine

ding. That pin-sharp control is evident on twisting country roads where the car comes into its own, sitting squarely on the road, delivering awesome cornering grip.

The ride is far from the most comfortable that you will ever have, but it is undoubtedly one of the most exhilarating.

My niece's desire to own a Mini is something which also spans the generations. While she sat enthusing about her ride in the car, her mother sat across the room nodding in sympathy: "I was just the same at her age. All I wanted was a red Mini Mayfair." And did she get one? Yes she did.

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Wheels and deals

■ TWO family favourites have been awarded the maximum five-star rating by Euro NCAP, the internationally-recognised body responsible for assessing crash safety. The rating scheme focuses on the vehicle's overall safety performance which gives consumers an easy to understand single score. The system considers occupant protection, child protection, pedestrian protection and the availability of driver aids. The Honda CR-V and the Citroën C4 Picasso have both achieved the coveted five-star overall rating.

■ SEAT has launched its answer to Volkswagen's hot GTD diesel hatch: the Leon FR 2.0 TDi. Available to order now, ahead of deliveries starting in September, the Leon FR 2.0 TDi promises to combine hot hatch performance with supermini running costs thanks to its 67.3 mpg combined fuel consumption and CO2 rating of 109 g/km. The Leon FR 2.0 TDi 184 PS costs from £22,075 for the three-door SC.

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2003 03	TOYOTA COROLLA 1.6 T3 VVTi, 5 Door, Dark Green, 2 owners, Alloys, PAS, Electric windows, Electric door mirrors, Aircon, Radio/CD, Good service record, Sold with a new MOT a full service and a new cambelt kit, HPI Clear	£2,995
2006 06	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7 DCI SPORTIVE (DIESEL) VAN, Silver, Good condition, PAS, Aircon, Alloys, Radio/CD, Ply lined, Electric windows, Recent new cambelt kit, Sold with a new MOT, HPI Clear.....	£2,850
2001 51	VOLVO C70 CONVERTIBLE, Silver, Leather interior, Electric hood, Alloys, Electric windows, Electric mirrors, Radio CD, Aircon, etc etc, Excellent condition, Local car, Sold with a new MoT a full service and a new cam belt, HPI clear	£2,495
2001 51	VW POLO 1.4 MATCH, Dark Blue, 5 Door, Local car, PAS, Aircon, Central locking, Radio/CD, Electric windows, Very good service record, Nice condition, Sold with a new cambelt a new MOT and a full service, HPI clear.....	£2,495
2003 53	CITROEN C3 1.4 SX, Silver, 5 Door, PAS, Electric windows, Remote central locking, Radio CD, Lovely through out, Sold with a new MOT and a full service and a new cam belt kit, HPI clear.....	£2,495
2002 52	SKODA FABIA 1.4 SILVERLINE, 5 Door Hatchback, Alloys, Electric windows, Radio/CD, PAS, Local car, Very tidy condition, Sold with a new MOT a full service and a new cambelt, HPI Clear.....	£1,995
2001 Y	FORD MONDEO 1.8 LX, 4 Door Saloon Met silver/green, Remote central locking, Electric windows, Aircon, PAS, Nice condition for the year, Sold with a new MOT and a full service the car has no cam belt, HPI clear	Arriving weekend
2001 Y	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LX, Metallic Blue, 5 Door	Arriving weekend
1997 P	TOYOTA CELICA 1.8 ST COUPE, Turquoise Blue, Exceptional Condition, PAS, Alloys, Central Locking, Electric Windows, Sun Roof, Local Car, HPI Clear	Arriving weekend

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Newcarscene

Versatile new Picasso proves crowd pleaser

THERE'S only one problem with success, and that's how to follow it. It's a tricky one all right; the first generation Citroën Picasso (based on the Xsara) was a solid-gold hit and sold by the shipload, thanks to keen pricing and tons of space.

The next generation did well too, although it had tougher rivals to contend with.

Now there's a brand-new C4 Picasso MPV, and once again it faces a difficult task. The competition is hotter than ever, and buyers are more demanding than ever too. Just having space isn't enough; comfort, attractive design and

fuel efficiency appear on most shopping lists — this is a tough crowd to please.

This new C4 Picasso is a much more sophisticated device, however. The key advance is that the C4 Picasso is the first of a series of Citroëns to use the new EMP2 platform.

Because of its modular design, it can be lengthened to create a whole range of vehicles and it's also been created to save weight; the new C4 Picasso is 140kg lighter than the previous model.

Despite this, Citroën claims it is stronger and stiffer than the outgoing car, which is good

news for protection in the event of a crash. Important stuff then, but it's the outside that will get your attention first.

Much more than a box on wheels, the C4 Picasso has a large glass area and slim LED headlights that help to create a more distinctive look.

It's clearly related to the previous generation model but with more character; it has certainly benefitted from the impressively-stylish DS models elsewhere in the range. Compared to its key rivals the C4 Picasso certainly looks smart, is well-equipped and impressively versatile.

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With antique jewellery, the value doesn't just lie in the precious metals and the gemstones used but the history, rarity and interest which is what ultimately sells the item. The guide, below, shows the recognised eras of antique jewellery will help you spot a rare gem by recognising styles, fashions and historical events which influenced the jewellery of the time.



1714 - 1830

Starting with Georgian Jewellery from 1714 to 1830 when nature was a strong design feature and we see items depicting flowers, leaves, insects and birds during this era. Engraved gemstones and intaglios were favoured and stones such as agate, garnet, turquoise and particularly pearls were all the fashion.

1861

The death of Queen Victoria's husband Albert in 1861 change the fashion for jewellery when the whole country followed Victoria's lead and went into mourning. This latter part of the century brought us sentimental often religious jewellery made from black jet, onyx and decorated with black enamel.

1867

The early Victorian era which followed saw designs of a more romantic nature and scroll-work, floral sprays, hearts and bows. Similar gemstones were still popular from the Georgian period but the discovery of diamonds in South Africa in 1867 increased the availability and therefore affordability of diamond set jewellery.

1890

During the years of Queen Victoria and Edward, starting in 1890 a trend called Art Nouveau challenged the tight conventions of the Victorian period and used flowing dreamlike feminine figures, enamel, inexpensive moonstone, citrine cabochon gemstones and freshwater pearls in their designs blending nature and fantasy. Famous jewellers well known for this style is Rene Jules Lalique and Louis Tiffany.

1894

At this time began the industrial revolution and mass production which affected the whole manufacturing industry. As a reaction to these changes the Arts and Crafts movement began in 1894 when many jewellers rebelled against modern manufacturing and returned to intricate jewellery designs and handmade craftsmanship. These designs were often a simple pattern with colourful decorations and uncut stones. Both the Art Nouveau and the Arts and crafts movements came to an abrupt end at the start of World War 1 in 1915.

1901

After the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, her son Edward and his elegant wife took the throne and so began the Edwardian period. Fashions at the time were for lighter delicate fabrics and pale pastel, up swept hair and accentuated necklines. Jewellery followed suit with the trend for necklaces and chokers booming and the new use of platinum allowed jewellery to be lighter, lacy and more intricate and was often used to set diamonds and pearls. The trend also included garland motifs, swags, bows, tassels.

1918

After the war the Art Deco period began bringing the excitement and vibrancy of the jazz age to jewellery design. Colour and shapes were a big influence and geometrical angular designs contrasted the dainty Edwardian jewellery. Stones were cut into triangles, pentagons, and squares. Pave set diamonds were often accented with contrasting coloured gemstones including rubies, sapphires, emeralds and onyx. Money was no object and jewellers such as Cartier and Van Cleef and Arpels were popular with this style.

1939

The Second World War and the great depression put an end to the Art Deco period and ended the distinctive fine jewellery eras as we know them.



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